



Supreme Court of Illinois

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SUPREME COURT APPOINTS ALEXANDER COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY AS CIRCUIT JUDGE

The Illinois Supreme Court announced Wednesday the appointment of Alexander County State's Attorney Jeffery Blaine Farris as resident Circuit Judge in the First Judicial Circuit. He was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Stephen Spomer on November 30, 2014.

Mr. Farris' appointment is effective January 16, 2015 and will terminate December 5, 2016 when the position will be filled by the 2016 General Election.

Mr. Farris, 51, was elected Alexander County State's Attorney in 1992, and was re-elected by voters to six consecutive four year terms. Prior to his election as state's attorney, Mr. Farris served as Pulaski County Public Defender from 1991-1992, and was in solo practice from 1989-1992. Over the course of his career, Mr. Farris has practiced in nearly every area of civil and criminal law.

"I am grateful for the appointment and to the Supreme Court and Justice Karmeier for placing their confidence in me," Mr. Farris said. "I am proud to have served the citizens of Alexander County for the past twenty two years as state's attorney.

"I am looking forward to continuing to serve the citizens of Alexander County as a circuit judge."

A 1986 graduate of the University of Illinois, Mr. Farris received his *juris doctor* degree from Southern Illinois University School of Law. He was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1989.

Active in various legal, civic, and charitable organizations, Mr. Farris has served as lifetime member, director, and chairman of the board of trustees for the Olive Branch United Methodist Church, and as former director, president, and benefactor of the Southern Foundation, Inc. He has also served as former president and director of the Cairo Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Farris is a member of the Illinois State Bar Association, the Illinois States Attorney's Association, and the Alexander-Pulaski Counties Bar Association.

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A lifelong resident of Olive Branch, Mr. Farris has been married to wife Terri for 33 years. They have two children.

Mr. Farris was chosen in an application process that included review by a six-member screening committee appointed by Supreme Court Justice Lloyd A. Karneier, who recommended Mr. Farris to the Supreme Court.

Each applicant was interviewed and their credentials reviewed by members of the screening committee and by Justice Karneier.

The screening committee members were: retired Judge Stephen Spomer, who served on the Fifth District Appellate Court, and who served as chairman of the screening committee; attorney William Ballard of Anna, currently in private practice as a sole practitioner after previously serving as Union County State's Attorney; attorney Mark Johnson of Cairo, who is in private practice as a sole practitioner; attorney Patrick Duffy of Anna, currently in private practice as a sole practitioner and also serving as the Felony Public Defender in Union County; attorney John Holland, Jr. of Cairo, who is in private practice as a sole practitioner; and attorney James Flummer of Mounds, who was a sole practitioner until his recent appointment as Pulaski County State's Attorney.

Alexander County is one of nine counties in the First Judicial Circuit; the Circuit is also composed of the southern Illinois counties of Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union, and Williamson.

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(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Joseph Tybor, director of communications to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.2323 or Dawn Frison Cook, senior communications specialist to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.0870)